

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
PRAIRIE HILLS PLAZA
September 19, 2016

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present

Russ Cusack, Tim Davenport, Kirsten Dvorak, Rodney Gillund, Vickay Gross, Becki Hoff, Deborah Jendro, Julie Magnus, Kevin McDonough, Gillian Plenty Chief, Darcy Severson, Susan Sisk (morning) Jason Sutheimer.

Members Absent

Joseph Hall, Marshall Longie, Darren Moos, Sherry Shirek, Susan Sisk (afternoon)

Chairperson Vickay Gross called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Agenda

Action: A motion was made by Rodney Gillund and seconded by Gillian Plenty Chief to accept the agenda. Motion carried.

Approval of July 21 & 22, 2016 Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Susan Sisk and seconded by Kirsten Dvorak to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from its last meeting on July 21-22, 2016. Motion carried.

Budget Report – Russ Cusack

Russ Cusack informed the Council the WIOA regulations are final as of today. DVR will provide all SRC members a copy of the regulations in Word format in an e-mail.

The federal fiscal year ends on September 30, 2016 and based on current forecasting DVR is on track to spend all fiscal funds for FFY 2015 and to meet the 15% set-aside for pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). Pre-ETS services are provided through purchase of service agreements and tracking staff time. DVR is planning to decrease the Pre-ETS contracts and provide additional Pre-ETS services utilizing DVR staff time. Starting October 1, 2016, DVR will start using 2016 federal funds. There was an increase in the FFY 2016 grant by \$300,000 and this requires a 23% state match. DVR is currently in the process of submitting the budget to OMB. The Governor will provide a budget address in prior to the start of the legislative session.

Community Living Services Expanded SEP Update – Jeff Anderson

Jeff Anderson reported CLS is currently serving five individuals. One individual has been successful in finding competitive integrated employment in a position she described as her “dream job”. Prior to participating in this program the individual was working approximately five hours per week in a cafeteria. In April she started working in

a daycare and was making \$9.00 per hour and has since found a position with at a new daycare making \$10.00 per hour and averaging 20 hours per week. The other individuals in the program are currently involved in the Discovery process and exploring what careers interest and motivate them. During the discovery meetings, one individual who has a history of speaking very little, has been very engaged in the process and has expressed her interests and desires.

Jeff also shared they are utilizing some of the skills learned through Discovery training with other clients. The Discovery process was used for a transition student in a small community who had been unsuccessful in finding summer employment. After going through this process, CLS was able to assist the individual in obtaining summer work as a reporter for the local newspaper and she has maintained this employment.

Darcy Severson expressed some of the challenges Pride, Inc. has faced when working with individuals in this program. Many individuals, their family members, and case managers are often very concerned with losing medical and financial benefits through social security. Although benefits planners are available for consultation, some individuals continue to have significant concern with losing these benefits.

IPAT Presentation – John Vastag

John Vastag shared information about the Interagency Project for Assistive Technology (IPAT), which is the Governor's designated agency for assistive technology. Each state has an assistive technology program. IPAT serves individuals of all age ranges with all types of disabilities across the state. IPAT provides product demonstrations, equipment rental, a used equipment program, funding, public awareness, services for a fee and contracted services. The funding program raises money to provide financial support for AT items to individuals who have exhausted all other sources of funding. IPAT also manages an AT financial loan fund with low-interest, guaranteed loans with flexible payment plans. IPAT also implements state programs including the Assistive Safety Devices Distribution Services (The Senior Safety Program), iCanConnect and the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Service. In addition to these programs and services IPAT staff can are trained in completing ergonomic assessments.

IPAT currently has a purchase of service agreement with DVR. Through this agreement one AT consultant works with transition students, ages 14-21, across the state. The AT consultant collaborates with students, families, and school staff to discuss AT services and equipment that the student will need for the transition from high school to college or work. AT needs for home, school, and community environments are discussed. IPAT also hosts a distribution center where all school districts across the state can list AT equipment that can be borrowed, loaned, or sold to other districts. The AT consultant also works with the students, families, schools, and other agencies to determine the responsible parties for funding AT.

Transition Presentation – Kevin McDonough & Kirsten Dvorak

Kevin McDonough presented on the technical assistance grant the ND Department of Public Instruction has through the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition.

The partners in this five year grant project include Vocational Rehabilitation, Pathfinders, Anne Carlson Center, Department of Human Services Behavioral Health and the West Fargo school district. The focus of this project is to assist ND schools and DVR to effectively implement five identified evidence based practices that improve secondary transition services and result in positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

1. Development of a standard soft skills curriculum to address the core area of workplace readiness training
2. The use of a co-instructional model in the implementation of the instruction for that curriculum
3. The development of a competency based job coaching curriculum that addresses the core area of work based learning
4. The development of a peer-to-peer job coaching model that uses the competency based curriculum to train age level peers
5. The use of data to make decisions about adjusting the transition services provided by the school

Seven core areas of school-based transition services have been identified that lead to positive post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. The seven core areas are: job exploration, post-secondary exploration, work place readiness training, self-advocacy, work based learning, attendance and grade/s academic achievement. Student engagement is in an important part of all areas. The West Fargo school district and the Fargo Regional VR office are the focus for this pilot. The developed curriculums will be implemented in the West Fargo school district next year.

Kirsten Dvorak presented on the peer-to-peer project initiated last year at Century High School in Bismarck. The project was implemented with a goal of increasing inclusion for students with disabilities during school social events and extra-curricular activities. General education and special education students were intermixed in the Peer to Peer Leadership class. The students in the class spent time together in class, during free periods at school, and attended extracurricular activities together. The students also learned about disabilities and how to provide accommodations and natural supports for individuals with disabilities. Kirsten reported by the end of the year, many of the general education students were using their free time to provide natural supports to the students with disabilities and identified that friendships had been developed. The students with disabilities reported being more comfortable and confident when engaging in social activities through the school. This program was a success and has been expanded and continued for a second year at Century. It has also been implemented at Legacy High School and Bismarck High School.

Approval of 2017 Meeting Dates

January 12

April 27-28

July 27-28

October 24-25

Members discussed having the fall meeting in conjunction with the 2017 Governor's Workforce and HR Conference or going back to holding it with the Annual DVR Training in October. The DVR training dates are October 25-27.

Action: A motion was made by Rodney Gillund and seconded by Becki Hoff to accept all of the meeting dates as presented. Motion carried.

SRC Attendance at DVR Annual Training

The SRC will cover the registration and travel expenses for up to nine members to attend the DVR Annual Training. Members who have expressed interest in attending include Rodney Gillund, Jason Sutheimer, Marshall Longie, Julie Magnus, and Darren Moos. Kirsten Dvorak and Darcy Severson will also attend as they are presenting the business awards.

Appoint Chair-Elect

Action: A motion was made by Deborah Jendro and seconded by Tim Davenport to nominate Kirsten Dvorak for the position of Chair Elect and Kirsten accepted the nomination.

Roll Call Vote Taken

Yes: Tim Davenport, Kirsten Dvorak, Rodney Gillund, Vickay Gross, Deborah Jendro, Julie Magnus, Kevin McDonough, Gillian Plenty Chief, Darcy Severson, Jason Sutheimer.

No:

Motion passed 10-0.

Tribal Updates

Gillian Plenty Chief, Standing Rock Vocational Rehabilitation Project

Gillian Plenty Chief reported the Standing Rock VR is preparing for year-end deadlines. They are trying to obtain receipts from some past purchases throughout the year in preparation of a financial audit. Gillian states they are expecting to meet all of their projected goals. They have met their goal for successful closures. Most of their successful closures on the ND side do not have shared cases with ND DVR. Coordination with DVR has decreased following the recent staff turnover in the Bismarck DVR office.

Individuals who commute between Bismarck and Standing Rock are impacted by the current pipeline protests due to road barricades. They recently had one individual who applied for VR services stating he needed a ride home to Missouri in order to attend doctor appointments. He was in the local area because of the protest. Gillian is expecting additional individuals to come to the office in similar situations.

Kevin McDonough provided an explanation of the Standing Rock School classification. The high school and elementary school are both classified as BIA schools and are governed under federal programming. The middle school is a ND public school. Some

of the students in the middle school are identified as public school students and others are identified as BIA students.

RSA WIOA Regional Meeting Report – Russ Cusack

The RSA Regional Meeting was held in Chicago on September 7, 2016. Russ Cusack and LouAnn Nider attended from DVR and Vickay Gross represented CAP. Russ reported RSA emphasized employment outcomes must be in integrated and competitive settings. The homemaker closure can't be considered a successful closure outcome and individuals working under Ability One contracts are not able to be considered successfully employed in competitive integrated settings under the WIOA guidelines. RSA discussed the 15% set-aside for Pre-ETS. Job coaching is not considered a covered service under Pre-ETS. The Section 511 reviews were also discussed. Russ reports that ND has started completing the reviews. The DVR state office staff and the Dickinson regional administrator are doing the reviews. Reviews have been completed at HIT (Mandan) and HAV-IT Services (Harvey). The reviews are going well and some of the individuals who are working in the facilities are also working in the community. Rebecca Haas, SRC Liaison, will send all committee members Russ's notes from the meeting.

Committee Chair Reports

Membership/PR Committee – Darcy Severson, Chair

The Town Hall meeting planning has been tabled until January due to conflicts with scheduling community access television as a result of the political season. Darcy Severson will be the SRC chairperson starting January 1, 2017 so the committee needs a new chair. Joe Hall has been nominated as the committee chair. As Joe was not at the meeting, Vickay Gross has agreed to be chair in the event that Joe declines.

The committee proposed hosting orientation training for new members before or after the January meeting and is requesting feedback from the council. The full council agreed to hold orientation for new members from 12-1 PM on January 17 prior to next meeting if the polycom is available.

Tim Davenport not planning to pursue a second term. His current term ends 11/30/16 and he represents business and industry. The SRC is not in compliance with federal guidelines as 51% of the members have not self-disclosed having a disability. Two applications have been received for the current or former applicant or recipient of VR position which will be open effective 10/31/16. The committee believes it appears both applicants would be good members and both could be part of the council as the council is seeking additional members to meet the federal requirement to have 51% of the members have a disability. Jamie Hall has submitted an application as a representative from the Tribal SRC program. Chairperson Vickay Gross will contact Jamie to inquire about her ability to attend the scheduled meetings.

Action: A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer and seconded by Rodney Gillund to recommend to the Governor's office both VR client applications be appointed to the SRC. Motion carried.

Resource Committee

Tim Davenport reported on the continued follow-up with the staff satisfaction survey that was completed in October 2015. The resource committee is requesting the implementation of a follow-up survey to evaluate how the staff have received the agency's response to the survey results. The committee is also requesting the DVR staff participate in ongoing surveys. Jason Sutheimer has been nominated as the new committee chair as Tim Davenport's term with the SRC will expire on 11/30/2016.

Planning/Evaluation Committee

Kirsten Dvorak reports the most recent consumer surveys have been reviewed. The satisfaction rate for the 3rd quarter was 86% and the most commonly reported problem was the counselor was not helpful or supportive and communication with the counselor. There has been significant staff turnover within DVR and ongoing staff training continues. Rodney Gillund emphasized the thoroughness of the data with this survey in comparison to the past survey methods. There are two years left in the contract with Market Decisions.

The state plan has been submitted and DVR has not received any feedback.

Regional Updates

Region 4 Update – Linda Kinzler, Regional Administrator from Jamestown

Linda Kinzler reports they are expecting a new staff member to start on October 1, 2016. Linda states the vision rehabilitation specialist has met almost all of his goals. He serves many of the small communities in the region and has been using his down time while in outlying communities to visit with businesses and provide information about DVR services. The application goal for 110 services has been exceeded. They are expecting to meet their goal for successful closures and have four individuals employed, and the cases should be closed prior to the end of the fiscal year. Linda reports that Pizza Corner has historically been a good employer, but with new ownership they closed the Valley City factory and as a result many employees were let go. Linda also reports there has been a population shift in the regional counties as some of the outlying counties have aging populations and the VR staffing of these counties has been adjusted to meet these changes. As a result of the population shifts, there will be two counselors working in the Jamestown Public Schools, which is an increase from one. Five new nursing homes have opened in Jamestown and they are having difficulties with staffing.

Region 6 Update – David Kvasager, Regional Administrator from Grand Forks

David they have been fully staffed since January and currently have a graduate intern from Grand Forks. In the past they have hired their interns upon graduation. Their office covers 19 high schools and 56% of their caseload is transitioning youth. They are exceeding their goals for number of applicants and employment plans written. They are at 86% for their successful closure goal and are expecting to close 7 additional individuals before the end of the FFY. The vision specialist has exceeded her goal for individuals served (goal of 80, served about 100). Eligibilities are determined in about

one month's time. The Grand Forks public school system has a Pre-ETS contract. The initial contract covered June through August and it was been extended through May 2017. DVR counselors serving youth in rural schools are providing Pre-ETS services. The business specialist in Fargo has recently trained Grand Forks staff on approaching businesses. The Grand Forks and Fargo offices have sent letters to the MN VR regional managers asking individuals on the MN waitlist if they want to apply in ND.

Next meeting will be held January 12, 2017 starting at 1 p.m. in the Prairie Rose Room at the Prairie Hills Plaza.

Action: A motion was made by Darcy Severson and seconded by Julie Magnus to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.